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April 11, 2006

Full Tilt Poker's Pros Own the Felt at Bellagio and Foxwoods

Los Angeles, CA - Full Tilt Poker pros Victor Ramdin and Erick Lindgren dominated the competition in tournaments nearly 3,000 miles apart last weekend, claiming victories at the WPT Foxwoods Poker Classic and the Bellagio Five-Start World Poker Classic.

In Connecticut, Victor Ramdin outlasted 430 other players to claim first place at the $10,000 buy-in, WPT Foxwoods Poker Classic. Ramdin's $1.3 million payday was the biggest of his career. In addition, Ramdin's victory also earned him a seat at the WPT $25,000 buy-in Championship tournament at the Bellagio later this month.

Team Full Tilt member Erick Lindgren will also be playing in the WPT Championship event, after winning his $25,000 buy-in and more than $260,000 in first-place money at the $3,000 Bellagio Five-Star Poker Classic. Lindgren beat 227 other players to claim his victory. Last year, Lindgren finished sixth in this tournament, claiming $25,000 in prize money.

"Victor and Erick both had incredible showings last week," said Team Full Tilt member Howard Lederer. "Their respective wins once again show the depth of talent at Full Tilt Poker, and are great confidence builders for both players as they head toward the WPT Championship and then, the WSOP."

Ramdin and Lindgren represent one of the fastest growing online poker sites, www.FullTiltPoker.com, and spend several hours a week online helping amateur players learn the game by sharing their poker knowledge through real-time chats at the virtual tables. Along with Ramdin and Lindgren, 31 other top poker professionals play at www.FullTiltPoker.com, where they have helped to create the best possible atmosphere for players who want to improve their games.

"Team Full Tilt," is a select group of the world's finest professional poker players, including Chris Ferguson, Phil Ivey, Howard Lederer, Jennifer Harman, Erick Lindgren, Erik Seidel, Andy Bloch, Phil Gordon, Clonie Gowen, John Juanda, and Mike Matusow. Full Tilt Poker offers players the unique opportunity to Learn, Chat and Play poker with the best poker pros in the game.

About Full Tilt Poker

Full Tilt Poker™ software was developed by TiltWare LLC, a software development and licensing company based in Los Angeles, California and licensed to Kolyma Corporation, A.V.V. which is regulated and licensed by the Kahnawake Gaming Commission in Canada. "Team Full Tilt," is a select group of the world's finest professional poker players, including Chris Ferguson, Phil Ivey, Howard Lederer, Jennifer Harman, Erick Lindgren, Erik Seidel, Andy Bloch, Phil Gordon, Clonie Gowen, John Juanda, and Mike

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For more information please contact:
Michele Clayborne
On behalf of Full Tilt Poker
EMC-PR@verizon.net
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April 15, 2005

Nevada players ante up online

By Liz Benston <benston@lasvegassun.com>
LAS VEGAS SUN

Every day hundreds of Las Vegas residents break the law for a shot at fame and fortune or just a bit of fun.

They work in casinos and in offices. They pay their taxes and hold steady jobs.

And many don't even know they are lawbreakers.

Among them is Jeff Larsen, a casino worker at the Bellagio who has turned a hobby into a part-time job.

From home, Larsen now plays up to eight games of online poker at a time on two computers. Gambling in Internet poker rooms up to 40 hours a week nets Larson about the same kind of money he makes at his casino job.

"It's convenient, the games are really good and you've got people on the Internet just giving their money away," he said. "Playing in a casino is just getting old for a lot of people."

David Matthews, a webmaster for the LasVegasAdvisor.com consumer Web site, said he makes about $150 per hour for the 20 or so hours per week he plays online poker.

"I can't afford not to play," Matthews said. "If I decided to play full time I could probably make $30,000 a month. "I know people who've given up their day jobs."

Online poker is faster, doesn't require tipping a dealer and often features cash bonuses for players, he said. It also draws players who are "fast and loose," translating into good games at all hours, he said.

"On a Wednesday in the morning you're not going to find a good game in Vegas," Matthews said. Players in Las Vegas cardrooms at that time are

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"better than average and protective with their money."

A casino manager in Las Vegas, who declined to be named, said he plays poker only online these days.

"People can see where I'm from online. I always get asked, 'Why do you play online when you can play in the casinos?' " the manager said. "I laugh and say, 'Because they look at you funny when you sit down in your underwear.' "

"At home I can multitask," the manager said. "I cleaned out my entire fish tank one day and never missed a hand."

It's a little-known fact that Nevada is only one of a handful of states that specifically prohibits both players and Internet operators from engaging in online betting.

A state law passed in 1997 barred the placing of wagers on the Internet. Persons who break the law are guilty of a misdemeanor.

The law doesn't exclude Internet poker.

Online poker players in Nevada and online poker rooms that take bets from state residents are breaking the law if they are dealing in real money, according to Nevada's top gaming regulator.

Nevada Gaming Control Board Chairman Dennis Neilander said his agency is considering whether to take its first steps to prosecute Internet poker players.

"We haven't taken any action yet and we're still ferreting through Internet wagering, not just for poker but all types of Internet gambling," Neilander said this week. "If there's not a change in the federal law it's something we have to consider."

Keith Copher, chief of the Gaming Control Board's enforcement division, said his agency doesn't have the manpower to go after players who make wagers online.

"We would request help from the federal government," Copher said. "The best way to pursue (prosecution) is to go after the providers, (but) they're out of our jurisdiction."

The state faces a "prohibition problem," Senior Deputy Attorney General Toni Cowan added. "Are you going to burst into people's homes, their living rooms or their cars?" she said.

That would take a virtual army.

EmpirePoker.com, one of the larger sites on the Internet, estimates that as many as 11,000 Nevadans gamble during peak hours online.

"We get a wide variety of players, from professional poker players to complete novice players who watch TV and like what they see and try to play," Empire Poker General Manager Ron Burke said.

Nevada is one of the top 10 states in terms of online players, behind bigger states such as California, New York and Texas, he said.

But Nevada players don't seem to worry about being lawbreakers.

The fear of prosecution has been a "nonissue" for online poker players, said Barry Shulman, co-publisher of the poker magazine Card Player in Las Vegas.

"Everybody I know plays online," Shulman said.

"States just aren't going to get excited about someone placing $100 in an account in Aruba where it's legal," he said. "It's not only extremely difficult to track but it's such a minor thing on their radar screen. They'd be far more interested if I'm running a poker game out of my house in Las Vegas and a lot more interested if I'm running a poker game out of a bar and taking a rake."

An estimated 1 million to 2 million Americans are now playing online poker -- a trend fueled by televised poker tournaments and a flood of online games, books and other teaching aids. The U.S. Justice Department considers Internet poker games and other online gambling illegal but players and operators alike have largely thumbed their noses at the federal government, saying the law surrounding online gambling is unclear.

It's been nearly impossible for federal regulators to enforce the prohibition because the major Internet gambling sites operate from locations outside the United States in small countries where Internet bets are legal or unregulated.

Nevada is no different.

The Gaming Control Board cut short discussions about legalizing Internet gambling in 2002 after receiving official word of the Justice Department's opposition. Regulators at the time expressed concern that Internet operators could run afoul of federal law barring gambling across state lines.

The Internet transfers information over the path of least resistance, which could mean crossing state lines and using methods difficult to track, regulators said.

Keeping Internet operators out of Nevada "would be difficult to do because the Web sites move around so frequently," Neilander said.

"If we did an investigation, we would have to turn it over to the District Attorney or Attorney General's office. We would have to have some discussions with them to see if they have an appetite to consider those violations."

With a casino in close proximity to every home in the Las Vegas Valley, regulators and casino operators have long said that Internet gambling wouldn't be much of a threat to the state's casino industry and that Nevadans wouldn't gravitate to the Internet in droves.

The poker craze has created a different dynamic. Players say the presence of casinos has fueled interest in online poker and vice versa, creating a symbiotic relationship between casino poker rooms and their online counterparts that has become all too obvious in the nation's gambling capital.

The world's largest poker site, PartyPoker.com, now runs radio and television ads in Las Vegas. Local billboards advertise Internet poker sites, including a billboard near the airport that exclaims, "Your credit card will work here."

Internet poker worldwide generated some $1 billion in revenue last year and is expected to top $2.4 billion this year -- which is about what all of the table games on the Las Vegas Strip generated in gambling revenue last year, according to recent statistics compiled by gambling analysts Christiansen Capital Advisors. Last year online poker was 12 percent of worldwide Internet gambling revenue. This year poker's share is expected to climb to 20 percent.

By 2010, online poker revenue is expected to top $6.7 billion, or 27 percent of total Internet gambling and overtaking sports betting as the chief gambling activity online.

The Las Vegas Strip, by contrast, generated $5.3 billion in gambling revenue last year.

"When we first started looking at this I didn't believe it but I verified that with operators," Christiansen Capital President Sebastian Sinclair said. "It blew me away."

About 70 to 85 percent of online poker players are believed to be Americans.

The Orleans poker room -- Las Vegas' largest with about 40 tables -- has lost a few regular poker players to the Internet.

"For every one of those the Internet has brought us 10 players," Tournament Director Bryan Gurden said. "It's brought us more business than it has cost us."

A couple of years ago the Orleans poker room was about 80 percent local. With more players gambling on the Internet and watching poker on television, about half of the Gurden's customers these days are out-of-towners seeking live-action games.

Internet gamblers make up a "ton" of new players in the Bellagio's poker room -- home to some of the world's richest cash games, the casino's tournament director, Jack McClelland, said.

"Intimidation was one of the things that kept people out of the poker rooms," said McClelland, who is also a consultant for UltimateBet.com. "Poker players in general tend to be a little bit more aggressive than other individuals. They have a hard time turning it off in real life. They are the ones barking at the maitre d' or arguing with the front desk clerk."

McClelland said he is not paid by UltimateBet but receives a free, one-week vacation for promoting the site.

A majority of the 2,500 players who competed in the final championship event at last year's World Series of Poker -- the world's largest poker tournament -- gambled online and many won their $10,000 buy-in to the tournament from online satellite games, operators say.

The 2003 champion, the aptly named Chris Moneymaker, won his entry in the tournament from a site called PokerStars.com. Greg Raymer is another unknown who won his seat in the tournament from PokerStars.com and parlayed it into a championship.

The site recently awarded Miami Heat basketball star Shaquille O'Neal -- a Vegas regular -- with a complimentary seat in this year's tournament as a 33rd birthday present in addition to a year of poker coaching from Raymer.

Players are generally aware that the federal government doesn't like Internet gambling. Yet with all the major poker sites allowing Americans to gamble and the government doing little to stop them, players say they have no way of knowing that the sites are illegal.

Las Vegas resident Jeffrey Weisbroth, who plays at the Orleans poker room, is also a regular online.

"I work nights so it's convenient," Weisbroth said .

Weisbroth said he is not married to Internet poker and would give it up if the state publicized a position that the practice was illegal.

"I've heard conflicting information" on whether Internet poker is legal, he said. "If (Nevada) said it was illegal I'd cash out my bets. Just let me know."

Some attorneys argue that Internet poker falls into a legal gray zone.

The Wire Communications Act of 1961 outlaws sports betting over interstate lines and was intended to fight organized crime. Yet it is the primary federal law used to fight Internet gambling, a relatively modern invention. In a letter to Nevada regulators in 2002, the Justice Department applied the Wire Act to online bets. Some attorneys dispute that interpretation and often cite a 2001 federal court decision in Louisiana as a defense.

The court dismissed a lawsuit brought by gamblers who lost money on Internet sites and sued credit card companies for facilitating illegal bets. A judge tossed the suit and ruled the Wire Act didn't prohibit games of chance played online.

That hasn't stopped the federal government from going after offshore sites through their business partners.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Missouri last year gathered evidence of Internet gambling advertising from media companies and has threatened to prosecute such companies for "aiding and abetting" online betting -- a move that resulted in some Internet, radio and television companies pulling ads for Internet casinos.

In the company's annual report issued this month, WPT Enterprises said the Travel Channel has removed names and logos of Internet poker sites from its telecasts because the law surrounding online gambling is "unclear."

Las Vegas casino companies including MGM Mirage and Harrah's have already tested the waters with Internet gambling sites that blocked U.S. bets. But those sites -- which featured complicated software that could detect where gamblers were located -- folded for lack of business.

The top few poker sites, with little overhead costs and unlimited table capacity, are making spectacular profit that has already outpaced the world's most profitable casinos.

Experts estimate that the largest poker site, PartyPoker.com, will likely generate some $500 million in operating cash flow this year. That compares with about $352 million for Bellagio last year and about $300 million for the Venetian -- the Strip's most profitable casinos.

Based on market share estimates for the largest poker sites, PokerStars.com generates about $125 million in operating cash flow compared with $75 million for PokerRoom.com and $50 million each for ParadisePoker.com, UltimateBet.com and PacificPoker.com.

By comparison, MGM Grand -- the Strip's largest property -- generated some $290 million in operating cash flow last year. Caesars Palace generated about $149 million last year and Bally's generated about $81 million.

PartyPoker.com's parent company is rumored to be considering an IPO that could value the company from $5 billion to $6 billion. That would put the site in league with Las Vegas casino giants with a market capitalization less than Strip giants MGM Mirage and Caesars Entertainment Inc. but larger than Station Casinos Inc. and Boyd Gaming Corp.

"It's a shocking amount of money," said John O'Malia, chief executive of BetBug Ltd., a Toronto-based company that offers sports bets and other proposition bets on a network similar to that offered by peer-to-peer music file-sharing services. "I have to wonder if the whole reason for going public is to do something in the land-based (casino) space."

Buying competitors doesn't make much sense because the site already is so much bigger than the competition, O'Malia said. An IPO would give the company enough cash to build land-based casinos using a powerful brand, however, he said.

Bettors using BetBug believe its more likely that the PartyPoker IPO could fetch more than $5.6 billion.

"It's a gravy business compared to online casinos and sports books, which can lose money sometimes," bettor Matthews said. "A poker room never loses. They keep raking it in."

Some of those figures were recently made public when a London-based Internet gambling empire bought ParadisePoker.com in November.

For the six months ended January 31, Sportingbet Plc's pre-tax profit shot up 118 percent to $18.3 million in part because of the poker site. Paradise Poker contributed about $15 million in operating profit over a three-month period and about $24 million in income.

The site now has more than 830,000 customers and received an average daily poker rake of $261,668 -- more than double last year. It offers 858,324 games per day, a 61 percent increase.

The World Poker Tour recently launched an online poker Web site -- the first owned by a U.S. company. The site has a mechanism that aims to block U.S. bets so as not to run afoul of federal law.

Harrah's Entertainment Inc. isn't far behind. The company is working on creating a real-money poker site using the World Series of Poker brand that also would block U.S. bets. The company also is developing a play-for-fun Web site for American gamblers, according to sources familiar with those plans.

ESPN, which has the broadcast rights to the World Series of Poker and has begun airing a television drama about poker players, recently introduced a play-for-fun site called ESPN Poker Club.

North Dakota generated buzz last month for introducing a bill that would have legalized online poker to raise tax revenue. The bill was easily defeated in the state Senate over concerns about a potential challenge from the Justice Department.

A similar move would be unlikely in Nevada, which has a casino industry to protect and "has decided it's not willing to challenge the federal government's interpretation," said Tony Cabot, a Las Vegas attorney and Internet gambling expert.

Burke, of Empire Poker, said the legal question will likely "fade away" with time.

A game that was played in smoky bars and casino back rooms five years ago is now aired on major TV networks, he said.

"It's a completely mainstream activity," Burke said. "It is part of the American (experience)."

Meanwhile, the federal government is continuing its war of words against Internet gambling.

The World Trade Organization last week issued a complex ruling that calls into question the United States' ban on Internet gambling with respect to a little-known federal law permitting Internet betting on horse races. The ruling isn't expected to slow Internet bets though the extent to which it could help online gambling is unclear.

In one respect, the WTO agreed with the United States' argument that the country can use the Wire Act to maintain "protect public morals or maintain public order." The federal government maintains that Internet gambling has connections with organized crime and has been used to launder drug money and fund terrorism. Internet gambling backers say such claims are a shot in the dark, unproven and even laughable.

Like many in the gaming business, Sexton believes the government is better off regulating and taxing Internet bets rather than trying to prohibit it.

"Online poker and the online (gambling) world is far bigger than the U.S. and you're never going to be able to stop it," he said. "It's just amazing to me that you have have lotteries and yet tell somebody who works for a living that he can't take $20 and buy into a tournament in his own home. It seems un-American."10"States just aren't going to get excited about someone placing $100 in an account in Aruba where it's legal. It's not only extremely difficult to track but it's such a minor thing on their radar screen."

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Full Tilt Poker has an impressive record of televised poker spectaculars, most Monte Carlo where **Phil Ivey** took the winner's crown.

"The Global Poker Challenge continues our commitment to developing and exciting televised poker events," said **Ray Bitar**, CEO of **Tiltware, LLC**. "W pleased to sponsor this unique poker tournament where poker professionals an will compete against one another - and an opposing team - to see where the players in the world really are."

The Global Poker Challenge will be seen on **FSN** starting in January 2006 in the U additional 100 million households throughout the world on various broadcasters.

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Poker Professional Kristy Gazes Wins $250,000 at the FullTiltPoker.Net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas

Download this press release as an Adobe PDF document.

Fulltiltpoker.net representative Kristy Gazes defeats 22 of the world's best players in the first poker tournament broadcast live from Las Vegas on FOX Sports Net.

Las Vegas, NV (PRWEB) July 14, 2005 -- Kristy Gazes won the FullTiltPoker.Net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas in dramatic fashion by defeating five-time World Series of Poker bracelet winner Ted Forrest after nearly four hours of live tournament play on FOX Sports Net.

Gazes, a representative of www.FullTiltPoker.net, collected $250,000 of a $500,000 prize pool for her victory in the nationally-televised tournament. The FullTiltPoker.Net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas is the first-ever tournament broadcast live from Las Vegas, and featured an invitation-only field of 23 of the world's best players, including Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, Clonie Gowen, Erik Seidel, Daniel Negreanu, Annie Duke, and Johnny Chan. Collectively, the 23-person roster of players own a total of 59 World Series of Poker bracelets, including four from the WSOP Championship tournament.

For Gazes, who is a cash-game specialist, the victory represents her largest tournament win, and her first victory in a nationally-televised event. "Kristy's performance at the FullTiltPoker.Net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas once again showcases the depth of talent of the professional players associated with FullTiltPoker.Net," said Ray Bitar, CEO of TiltWare LLC.

Gazes represents one of the fastest growing online poker sites, www.FullTiltPoker.net, and spends several hours a week online helping amateur players learn the game by sharing her poker knowledge through real-time chats at the virtual tables. Along with Gazes, 26 other top poker professionals play exclusively at www.FullTiltPoker.net, where they have helped to create the best possible atmosphere for players who want to improve their games.

About Full Tilt Poker
Full Tilt Poker™ software was developed by TiltWare LLC, a software development and licensing company based in Los Angeles, California and licensed to Kolyma Corporation, A.V.V. which is regulated and licensed by the Kahnawake Gaming Commission in Canada. "Team Full Tilt" is a select group of the world's finest professional poker players, including Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, Phil Ivey, Howard Lederer, Erick Lindgren, Erik Seidel, Andy Bloch, Phil Gordon (co-host, "Celebrity Poker Showdown"), Clonie Gowen, John Juanda, Jennifer Harman and others. With innovative graphics, superior customer service and a safe, secure interface, the software is geared to enhance and personalize the online poker experience. Users of all skill levels can download the software at www.FullTiltPoker.net and play for fun online.

For more information contact:
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FullTiltPoker.net CEO Ray Bitar presents Kristy Gazes with her $250,000 check for winning the FullTiltPoker.net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas.
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Online Poker Forum - Fulltiltpoker.net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas

Author	Message
TilterMichael **Team Full Tilt** Joined: 22 Jun 2005 Posts: 5	Posted: Fri Jun 24, 2005 3:22 pm Post subject: Fulltiltpoker.net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas quote **FullTiltPoker.net and Fox Sports Net announce a live poker broadcast to showcase the world's top poker players in a $500,000 tournament.** Las Vegas, NV June 23, 2005 -- FullTiltPoker.net and Fox Sports Net (FSN) announce the first ever live televised poker tournament from Las Vegas. The online poker site and sports network are joining forces with Las Vegas' newest luxury resort on The Strip, Wynn Las Vegas, in a live broadcast of a $500,000 tournament featuring 27 of the world's greatest poker players. Three major forces in poker are joining together to bring viewers the first live poker broadcast from Las Vegas. FullTiltPoker.net, one of the leading free online poker sites, brings a handful of the world's best players to the tables. Wynn Las Vegas provides the newest luxury resort on the Strip, and FSN brings a wealth of experience in poker television, as well as cutting edge technology. The live tournament, "FullTiltPoker.net championship at Wynn Las Vegas," airs at 6:00 PM local on Wednesday, July 13, 2005. An encore broadcast of the show airs that night at 10:30 PM local.

Held at the night club La Bete at Wynn Las Vegas, the tournament features Team Full Tilt, some of the most well-known personalities in the game, playing for a $500,000 cash pool and other prizes. Scheduled to appear in the tournament are 2000 World Series of Poker champion Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, WSOP bracelet winners Phil Ivey, John Juanda, Erik Seidel, Jennifer Harman, 2003 World Poker Tour Ladies Night winner Clonie Gowen, plus poker pros Phil Gordon, Andy Bloch and Erick Lindgren. Also, 2004 Card Player Magazine Player of the Year Daniel Negreanu, Poker Ambassador to Wynn Las Vegas joins the fray. FSN veteran announcer Barry Tompkins calls the action, and poker pro Howard "The Professor" Lederer provides commentary.

"We are very excited about being a part of this premiere televised poker event. Team Full Tilt is one of the most respected groups of poker pros around," said Raymond Bitar, CEO of Tiltware, LLC, the consultants for FullTiltPoker.NET. "We could not envision any better partners than FSN and Wynn Las Vegas to showcase such talent."

"This live event is the next generation of poker programming," said George Greenberg, FSN's Vice President of Programming and Production. "Live poker was one of our highest rated shows last year, and we look forward to even bigger ratings this year."

FullTiltPoker.net and FSN set the tone for live televised poker. This tournament is:

* The only live televised poker tournament in the U.S. so far this year.
* Only the second live televised poker event ever (FSN's American Poker Championship in 2004 was the first)
* The first live televised poker tournament from Las Vegas
* The first major poker tournament at the new Wynn Las Vegas hotel and casino

And of course, with all these highlights, it wouldn't be an FSN event unless it offered the viewer more than just standard card games. Every player at the final table will be wearing a heart monitor. As they push tens of thousands of dollars into the pot, viewers will see if a player's heart rate is as steady as their demeanor.

With innovative graphics, superior customer service and a safe, secure interface, FullTiltPoker.net is the best free poker site on the Web. FullTiltPoker.net uses the Full Tilt Poker™ software which was developed by TiltWare LLC, a software development and licensing company based in Los Angeles, California and licensed to Kolyma Corporation, A.V.V. which is regulated and licensed by the Kahnawake Gaming Commission in Canada. "Team Full Tilt" is a select group of the world's finest professional poker players, including Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, Phil Ivey, Howard Lederer, Erick Lindgren, Erik Seidel, Andy Bloch, Phil Gordon (co-host, Celebrity Poker Showdown), Clonie Gowen, John Juanda, Jennifer Harman and others. Users of all skill levels can go to www.fulltiltpoker.net and learn from the pros.

(continued)

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TilterMichael
Team Full Tilt

Joined: 22 Jun 2005
Posts: 5

Posted: Fri Jun 24, 2005 3:26 pm Post subject: | quote

FSN reaches more than 81 million homes through its network of 20 regional sports channels. FSN, based in Los Angeles, serves as the cable TV home to 62 of the 82 MLB, NHL and NBA teams based in the United States, and produces over 4,500 live events each year. In addition to home team games, FSN telecasts a wide variety of national sports events and programming, including Best Damn Sports Show Period and Beyond the Glory. For the latest up-to-the-minute sports news and opinions, visit the FOX Sports/FSN website at www.FoxSports.com.

Wynn Las Vegas, a luxury hotel and destination casino resort located on the Las Vegas Strip, opened to the public on April 28, 2005. Wynn Las Vegas features 2,716 luxurious guest rooms and suites; an approximately 111,000 square foot casino; 22 food and beverage outlets; an on-site 18-hole golf course; approximately 223,000 square feet of meeting space; an on-site Ferrari and Maserati dealership; and approximately 76,000 square feet of retail space. For more information, visit www.wynnlasvegas.com.

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GripHoldOn
Moderator

Posted: Fri Jun 24, 2005 11:43 pm Post subject: | quote

I love Howard's commentary but I also like to see him participate... Why doesn't Howard play in the game? Also, Perry Friedman has a WSOP bracelet in omaha hi/lo and is one of the biggest contributors to the software that makes FTP great. I'd like to see him play in the tournament too.

Joined: 24 Jun 2005
Posts: 1563
Location: Boston, MA

GripHoldOn

AIM Screenname: GripHoldOn
E-mail address: GripHoldOn@yahoo.com

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Steve Brecher
Full Tilt Pro

Joined: 22 Jun 2005
Posts: 115

Posted: Sat Jun 25, 2005 2:47 pm Post subject: Re: Fulltiltpoker.net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas

quote

> **TilterMichael wrote:**
> Scheduled to appear in the tournament are ... Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, ... Phil Ivey, John Juanda, Erik Seidel, Jennifer Harman, ... Clonie Gowen, ... Phil Gordon, Andy Bloch and Erick Lindgren. Also ... Howard "The Professor" Lederer provides commentary.

The tournament is on Wednesday, July 13 -- won't most of these players and the commentator be playing during day 5 of the final event of the WSOP?

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GripHoldOn
Moderator

Joined: 24 Jun 2005
Posts: 1563

Posted: Sat Jun 25, 2005 5:42 pm Post subject:

quote

If they're half decent at poker they should make the final table of the main event. Anyone who doesn't do that just isn't good at No Limit Hold 'Em. 😃

GripHoldOn

Location: Boston, MA

AIM Screenname: GripHoldOn
E-mail address: GripHoldOn@yahoo.com

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instinctpoker
High Card

Joined: 28 Jun 2005
Posts: 7

Posted: Tue Jun 28, 2005 1:16 am Post subject: quote

Saw the comercial for this and its good. Finally another live event on TV. I thought the American championship was great live and the heads up between John D'Agostino and Phil Ivey was great. Hope this is a huge success and more live poker is on TV.

Steve

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Woodchuck55
Pair

Joined: 26 Jun 2005
Posts: 40
Location: Western Wisconsin

Posted: Tue Jun 28, 2005 8:07 am Post subject: Re: Fulltiltpoker.net Championship at Wynn Las Vegas quote

> **Steve Brecher wrote:**
>
> > **TilterMichael wrote:**
> >
> > Scheduled to appear in the tournament are ... Chris "Jesus" Ferguson, ... Phil Ivey, John Juanda, Erik Seidel, Jennifer Harman, ... Clonie Gowen, ... Phil Gordon, Andy Bloch and Erick Lindgren. Also ... Howard "The Professor" Lederer provides commentary.
>
> The tournament is on Wednesday, July 13 -- won't most of these players and the commentator be playing during day 5 of the final event of the WSOP?

I believe the key words here are"Scheduled to appear..."

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bivy
High Card

Posted: Mon Jul 18, 2005 1:22 pm Post subject: quote

Joined: 18 Jul 2005
Posts: 6

Anyone know when this will be shown again?

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kiddjason
High Card

Joined: 25 Jul 2005
Posts: 1

Posted: Mon Jul 25, 2005 10:19 pm Post subject: quote

I also missed the broadcast and would love to know when it's going to be replayed, or be available on DVD. Please email me at kiddjaso(AT)yahoo.com, substitute @ for (AT) - much appreciated.

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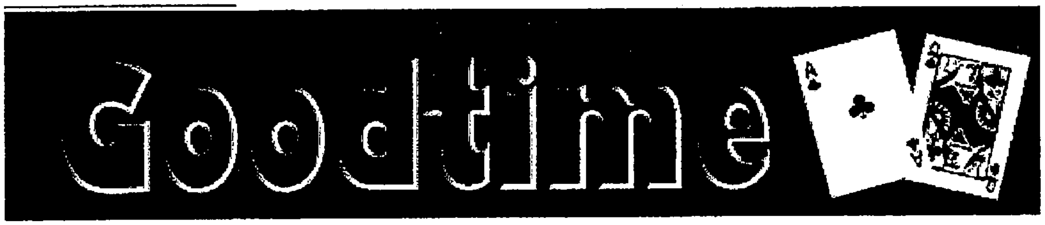
goodtime
Royal Flush

Joined: 24 Jun 2005
Posts: 615
Location: Michigan

Posted: Mon Aug 08, 2005 4:52 pm Post subject: quote

I'm not sure if it's going to be on DVD, but they should replay it a number of times.



AIM: BrandonB2413

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JS13_TPS
Four of a Kind

Joined: 20 Jul 2005
Posts: 308
Location: Georgia

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Posted: Sun Aug 21, 2005 5:44 pm Post subject: quote

I'd like to see it, anyone dvr it?

"Ummmm, Me love play poker"

profile

JetsFan28
Royal Flush

Joined: 19 Oct 2005
Posts: 725
Location: NY

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Posted: Fri Nov 11, 2005 5:50 pm Post subject: quote

i agree w/ gripholdon w/ this

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Annie Duke
...p

So, I was at the World Series of Poker.

Both Sides of the Rail
Commentary by Lisa Wheeler

So, I was at the World Series of Poker, at the Rio Hotel Resort and Casino in Las Vegas one day and I ran into Barry Shulman. For those of you who might be unfamiliar with the name, he is Allyn Jaffrey Shulman's husband . Now you get the picture. He is also the owner of a renowned poker magazine and plays a little on the side. Actually, he plays a lot of poker and quite well, I might add. Where there's Barry, there's Allyn. Even though they might have entered the same event, Barry is usually the one sweating Allyn at the final table. Anyway, we saw each other at the WSOP in Las Vegas and he asked me if I needed a job. "Do I look like I need a job?" I asked him. "Well, I could use some help in our vending booth", he says. I had just passed his marketing stand moments before. It was located in the lobby, where wafting cigarette smoke, stale air and suffocating crowds of human flesh meandered their way in and out of the event area and vending stations. I had also noticed the 6'2" goddesses pedaling his merchandise at the magazine's media coop. They were young, stately and aesthetically pleasing, in scantly attire, exhibiting their flat-belly-button-piercings, with magnetic smiles, long legs and flowing hair. "Sure Barry, that's exactly where I want to spend every day during the mother of all poker events. Thanks, but I'll pass". "Think about it", he says. "I'll even pay you". Believe me, I love Barry, but there isn't enough money to cover the therapy I would need after 45 days of exposure to that level of ego tamping trauma. I went back inside the event area to scan the rail of any friends, relatives, cronies and compatriots who might be playing, sweating or there to gape... Like me.

The poker area located inside the ballroom was bustling as much inside as outside in the lobby. It was wall to wall players at tables and ones who were waiting to be called from the list for ring games. There were spectators in the isles and sweaters on the rail. I could barely see through the crowd. I wandered around a bit and ran into some familiar faces; dealers and floor persons, casino executives from everywhere imaginable, players and spouses of participants from around the globe, and vendors I could only hope to connect with at prominent poker events. It resembled a holiday family reunion. Actually, the World Series of Poker is just that. The WSOP is the biggest event of the year, where the poker community comes from all over the world to meet, eat, chat, collect freebies, purchase precious memorabilia and play poker. It is an enormous affair and this year's turnout was beyond comprehension. 2005's tournament of champions tested the skills and pressed the luck of every contender for 45 days and 45 nights. It was a Mecca of sorts, maniacal, exhilarating, and all who had arrived had one thing in common, Poker.

For those not fortunate enough to attend the marvel, there was one saving grace. The press and media had shown up en masse and they were there to relate play by play, blow by blow, the latest knock outs, key hands and live action. They put a face to a name and a name to a face. ESPN was the elite coverage, but they allotted an area called the Press Box for international web sites to cover the tournaments in full glory. These news mules had press passes that allowed them to mingle among the players, stand at celebrity tables and tally the news for their patrons to devour. It gave a whole new meaning to the word "consumer".

Websites that received very little navigation from their customers over the past year had record hits across the board. Not only were fans from out of town privy to real time reports and reels, but also daily editorials, interviews with well known players, insightful coverage of up and comers and commentary by final table

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finishers, poker analysts and authors. The locals and players who retired to their hotel rooms and residences stayed glued to their laptops and desktops so they too, could follow the real time updates of the competition when too weary to remain on the sidelines. There were reviews of each game which allotted players the opportunity to compare with each other their opinions or tally up odds. They were able to experience the action away from the tables, right then, at the moment of glory or defeat. Family and friends back home could also tap into the plethora of broadcasts and highlights without having to wait for the transmission aired later on ESPN.

The press members were the chartered few, the privileged, sanctioned and liberated. They were immune to any rules of imposition among the players. They could go anywhere, see anything, and experience every event in all of its glory. All in the name of free press. I know how it feels to wander among those with privilege. As a dealer and tournament coordinator for the Bellagio Hotel Resort and Casino, in Las Vegas , I yearned, once more, to be one who glided easily from felt to rail without boundary.

As I was leaving the tournament venue that evening, I got a call on my cell phone from a girlfriend. I had just reached my car, parked far away on the edges of the lot outside the Rio Pavilion. She explained that she was on her way to the WSOP to sweat her husband in one of the events. She had also made reservations for dinner during his break and asked me if I'd like to join them. I was already at the venue, and the drive home through rush hour traffic sounded less than optimal, so I agreed to meet her at Buzio's Seafood Restaurant for a good meal, good wine and great conversation. My girlfriend is Suzie. I would be meeting her and her husband, Howard Lederer, for dinner that night. They would be the answer to all of my prayers.

There were over a dozen who arrived at the restaurant and we were all seated at a long table set with fine linens, crystal goblets and hand carved flatware. The food was rich and intoxicating, the wine was the finest red, (which I adore with seafood) and the air was thick with the aroma of fresh baked bread. I sat among the Full Tilt crew, ate and listened to their tales of legend and lore about the World Series of Poker, past and present. Okay, I know I sound epic, but work with me. It was *hot* . It was *cool* . And I was there. How much better could it get? Then Howard leans forward at the table and asks me, "Lisa, do you want to help our website to monitor chip counts? You could work for us during the tournament. We're short staffed for the events." I steadied the glass of wine to my lips and tried to swallow. He added, "Andy (Bloch) and Ray (Bitar) could utilize your experience and knowledge of the games, plus you already know most of the players." A moment passed. It was as though he wondered if his point might have been vague or misunderstood. "We could pay you," he continued. I sat there silent. Howard probably thought I was playing hard to get, pressing for a better monetary benefit. Really, I was just trying to process the information when he said, "I could get you a *Press Pass* . " It was kind of like getting a great hand. It's the one which hits on the flop, turns the nuts, and employs 8-way action on the river. "Howard," I said. "You had me at 'chip counts'".

So, I was at the World Series of Poker, at the Rio Hotel Resort and Casino in Las Vegas one day and I ran into Howard Lederer. He gave me a press pass. The rest is history, and the birth and brainchild of Poker Press Box.com.

Article by Lisa Wheeler

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Evelyn Ng
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Jennifer Harman
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Jun 19, 2006

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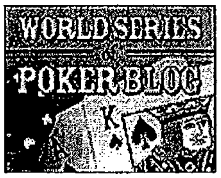
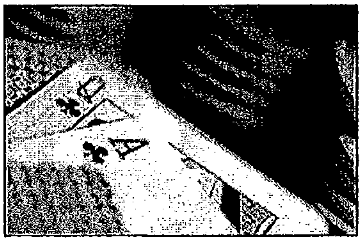


Posted: Thursday, July 07, 2005

By Michael Kaplan

Cigar Aficionado's *gambling columnist, Michael Kaplan, is holed up at the Rio in Las Vegas, home of the 2005 World Series of Poker championship starting today. Kaplan, a seasoned veteran of the gambling world, is filing daily tableside coverage of the $60 million event, which concludes with the final round on July 15. Eyes are on returning champion -- and CA cover boy -- Greg "Fossilman" Raymer, who won $5 million last year. Can he repeat as champion? Or could 2003 champ Chris Moneymaker, who rose from Internet obscurity, come back after being knocked out early last year?* ***Visit here every day to find out.***

ENTRY NO. 1
JULY 7, 2005
Pokermania



It's not exactly news that the world is poker-crazed. But right now, in Las Vegas, particularly at the Rio Hotel, where the World Series of Poker championship kicks off this afternoon, things have been taken to new levels of mania. To begin with, there'll be 6,000 or so competitors, each putting up a $10,000 entry fee and creating a prize pool of around

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$60 million (out of which the winner will take down $7.5 million). Beyond that is the brash commercialization of the game, stunningly illustrated by the so-called Lifestyle Show, a giant bazaar of booths and kiosks that everyone must pass through en route to the tournament room. Amid the sexy Bodog girls and roving pamphleteers, hordes of fans wait for autographs from Howard Lederer and Phil Hellmuth, check out Chris Moneymaker's line of poker tables, and try on hockey jerseys emblazoned with the names of famous Phils (Gordon, Laak and Hellmuth). Beside those who are selling the expected poker ephemera, some amazingly optimistic merchants are peddling rare coins, Lucky Aces jewelry and scented candles (try breaking out a couple of those at your next home game). Even more shocking: at least one woman views defending champ Greg "Fossilman" Raymer as enough of a fashion icon that she's taken to wearing those freaky Tower Of Terror sunglasses that became his trademark last year.

Yesterday was a relaxation day for most of the pros, but four top players spent the morning grappling in a squaring off over something that had absolutely nothing to do with cards. ESPN asked Ted Forrest, Robert Williamson III, Mike Matusow and Erick Lindgren to each choose a game of skill he'd like to compete in for a $15,000 prize. A decathlon was thrown together with air hockey, card flipping, a spelling bee and ping pong as the events. So as not to be a spoiler (it'll turn up on ESPN this summer), I won't tell you who won, but let's just say that Matusow and Lindgren got knocked out of the running. Later that night was the annual media tournament (a free-roll in which journalists play for $10,000 -- which must go to charity). Last year I won the thing; this year I got knocked out quickly and lost $20 to author Peter Alson (we bet on who would last longer). Celebs in attendance included a dapper-looking James Woods, super hot Shannon Elizabeth, hulking Penn Jillette, and razor-thin Nicole Richie who appeared bug-eyed in giant sunglasses as she sweated her chip-sucking/face-sucking boyfriend DJ-AM.

Parents who worry about their kids getting too into poker should have been at Howard Lederer's bash last night. The party was hosted at the home of Steve Zolotow, a New York-based pro whose lush Vegas spread (complete with caretaker's house and separate quarters for backgammon genius Paul "X-22" Magriel) is proof of the millions that are there to be won by sharp players. There was live music, barbecued steak and a great crowd (including pros Jennifer Harman, Andy Bloch and Matusow). Last week, during one of the preliminary World Series tournaments, Bloch drew attention after he spotted cards that appeared to be marked with their corners folded in various ways. Standing alongside an ice sculpture and a huge pile of shrimp at the Lederer/Zolotow party, Bloch diplomatically says that it mostly seems inadvertent (wear and tear on the cards) and blames the problem on Harrah's (which owns the Rio and the World Series). "They've chosen not to buy enough cards, which means that we don't begin with fresh decks every day," says Bloch. "But with the money that people put up to enter these events, something like that really shouldn't be an issue." Bloch's buddy Ray Bitar jumps into the conversation and likens the deck shortage to playing the French Open with old tennis balls. Both agree that the parsimony seems mind-boggling. Told of a rumor that only the low cards had been crimped, Bloch shrugs and replies, "If you ask what hurts more, cheating or the house's take of seven to eight percent, I'll tell you that the house's take [obviously higher than Bloch thinks it ought to be] hurts me a lot more."

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The Poker Professor: Interview with Howard Lederer

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July 28, 2005
John Caldwell

Howard Lederer is one busy guy. In addition to being a world-class poker player, Howard is one of the founders, and currently the President of Tiltware, the marketing and software company for Full Tilt Poker.

Never too busy to sit down with a member of the media, Howard and I recently sat down to discuss the state of poker, the state of his game, and the time he *didn't* make it in to the $10,000 main event of the WSOP.

John Caldwell: How involved are you, and the other players in the day-to-day decisions of what goes on at Full Tilt?

Howard Lederer: Well, I am the President of Tiltware. So, I work with Ray (Ray Bitar, CEO of Tiltware) on all the major day-to-day decision making with respect to software, and marketing. We do not own the operator.

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JC: I have heard you talk about all the things you have going on outside of poker. I assume being the President of Tiltware is the most demanding.

HL: Yes. That is the big commitment. I certainly have the DVDs, and some TV commentary here and there, but I wouldn't consider that terribly distracting. Trying to run a software company takes a lot of energy.

JC: Do you feel that it has affected your play?

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HL: Oh it has. 100%. I don't play at my best right now. I do the best I can when I play, which is quite a bit, but only in tournaments. I don't play sidegames. I have too much respect for the great, great players that play in the big side games for me to think that I can compete with them when I have so many other things on my plate.

Since I've been President of Tiltware, I'd guess I've won two tournaments. I've had a lot of fun in the big ones, but I am not satisfied with those results. I would like to do better. I can still play some pretty good poker when I put my mind to it, it's just that I don't have as much time as I would like to do so.

JC: When you are in the tournament playing, can you turn the distractions off?

HL: As we start to get more into the tournament, I get more and more focused. I think one of the things that does hurt me is that very early in the tournament, when the blinds are really small, or if I'm in a small- to medium-sized buy-in tournament, I probably still have business stuff in my head. As the blinds go up, the stack gets bigger, and you can start to smell the final table, that becomes all that matters.

The problem, of course is that if I don't have the focus in the early stages of the tournament, I don't get to that point as often as I should.

JC: What do you think are the one or two most pressing needs facing professional players, from top pros like yourself, all the way down to a guy that makes his living at a local casino?

HL: There is a very strong need for a players association. It would be good for the sport at all levels. Obviously, I have an interest in this sport from the business side too. I don't think it's in the long-term interest of the game, and therefore in the interest of the networks, or the sponsors to have a weak player side to the equation. Strong, healthy leagues, and sports have strong healthy players associations.

Right now, I think the players are being very short sighted, and they are leaving an enormous amount of sponsorship money on the table.

JC: How does that change?

HL: Well, it is changing. The top players are starting to insist, and say things like "Hey, if I can wear a logo, then I'll come play. If I can't, then I won't come play". And this has come down to the fact that there are finally more events, and more TV opportunities in the year than the single player can possibly do. So, these top players are finally able to start making these decisions, which then of course means that the events will have to start to compete for the participation of the players. I think that will lead to sponsorship. It's a beautiful model - the player gets sponsored for the buy-in, or some portion of the buy-in. It doesn't cost the TV people, or the TV sponsors any money. In fact, I would argue that having strong player representation by sponsors with sponsor logos in the shows will actually help TV. When sponsors get involved in a sport from the player side,

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and they get exposure in that sport via player logos, they are much more likely to sponsor events, they are much more like to buy 30 second spots. It aligns everyone's interests. But, as long as organizers, or TV say, "Oh, players can't wear logos", and the only compelling reason is because they **can** say no, which is really where they are at now. There's not really any reason to say no. Everyone loses in this scenario.

JC: Any player organizations that you have seen out there so far that you think could be the solution?

HL: I haven't seen it. I have not seen the organization out there yet that I feel is compelling enough, or has the right backing, or the right person at the helm, or the right energy to get this done. That isn't any knock on the people who have attempted this so far. It's just that it is going to take a special person, or people that really get it completely right and have all the right interests in mind - also, people with the right connections on the business side. This needs people that can bring these two sides together in a healthy way. I think this may be one of the hardest sports ever to pull this off because - Number one, who is a professional poker player? Number two - the very nature of poker players - they are fiercely independent, and they have a bit of a 'lone wolf' mentality, and it is not in their nature to be part of associations, and maybe make some short-term sacrifices for the greater good. Those are things that just don't come naturally for poker players.

JC: I have heard you say how important family is to success in poker. How does this 'lone wolf' philosophy fit in with the need for balance in life with a family. Are these two statements contra to each other?

HL: I don't think it's contra at all. You can talk about lone wolf all you want. You are a lone wolf as a poker player, you are out there, and you are fighting for yourself, **and** your family - and that's the key. That's why I think family is important. Having other people that you are playing for is important. But, that doesn't prevent you from being self-centered in the poker world itself. You are making your own way in the poker world, providing for yourself. But, when you are providing for yourself and others, then it makes you more responsible. You make better decisions, better bankroll decisions, and better game choices.

JC: Any young players who you think have a lot of game?

HL: I have been impressed by a number of young players. A young guy who has really impressed me is Joe Cassidy. Joe is young, and full of talent. Another guy is a guy we just signed, John D'Agostino, who before his 22nd birthday has been on TV three times. Another guy is Erik Sagstrom (Erik123), who is a very talented player. We're talking about guys that are world-class at an age where it's just not right, and we have internet poker to thank for that.

That being said, you go down to Bellagio, and look in at that $2,000/$4,000 game, it's the same faces. The internet will only get you so far. These guys have demonstrated tremendous talent, and they have a very bright future. But there is a little bit of hardening that has to go on, and that takes time. The internet doesn't get you to that next level. Guys like D'Agostino, and Cassidy are going to be working their ways up through the games. They are at that level, where they can beat up on the $400/800, and the $500/1,000 games, and as they gain experience at that level, in five or ten years, I think the face of that big game at Bellagio will change a lot.

JC: The WSOP had grown so massively. Talk about your first WSOP, and what that experience was like.

HL: The first time I went to the WSOP, I think there were 138 players, and I didn't get in. That was back in the days when, to get in to that thing, you had to show up with $10,000, or you had to win a single table. They didn't have supers, or online satellites all year like they do now. I had a $3,000 budget to get in, and I didn't make it. That was 1986, and I got in to the event in 1987 on my second or third try. I finished fifth, and I may have been the youngest, or the second youngest to make the final table. There might have been a player or two in the last couple years who was younger, I was 22 at the time.

I started playing in New York when I was 18, and losing almost every day. So, I already had some seasoning. I was as young and experienced as you could be at 21 or 22 ....back then. These days, you have so much more access to games, and hands, and table hours, that it's just a different story. I know how good I was for my age I was back then, and how bad I am compared to the great 21 year olds of today. You know a couple of these guys are going to be better than we thought possible.

JC: How much do you play online?

HL: I play about 10 hours a week. It's been tough over the last month (WSOP), but the pros who represent the site actually play on it. And, we are available about 10-12 hours a week chatting, and playing on the site.

JC: Do you think Online Poker will become legal in the US?

HL: You mean explicitly legal (smiles)? Not in the current political climate. Not right now. I think it could, and should happen. Maybe the U.K. will lead the way there. Obviously, they are going to make an attempt at doing that, and if they can show the political powers that be, *and* maybe there is a transfer of power here then maybe it's possible. That being said, there are rulings out there that say these laws apply strictly to sports betting, and you could argue that this would extend to all online gaming. But, even if you include all online gaming, there is another argument that poker wouldn't fall under that. Poker is a game of skill, gaming is chance. I think core politicians may not see the difference, but I think many judges get it. Also, I think even socially, and morally no matter where you stand, you can see that rolling dice and pulling slot machines are different activities than playing poker.

You can play, and chat with Howard at Full Tilt. Also, check out his DVD series at secretsofholdem.com

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The Business of Poker - Interview with Ray Bitar, CEO of TiltWare

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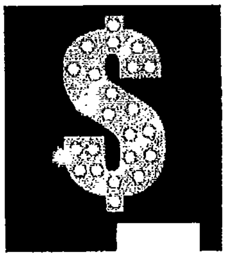
July 13, 2005
John Caldwell

Ray Bitar is one of the founders, and currently the CEO of TiltWare, which is the software and marketing company for Full Tilt Poker.

Full Tilt made a huge splash when it entered the online poker market a little over one year ago. The roster of top players assembled to be part of 'Team Full Tilt" was unprecedented.

Just over one year into its life as a company, I got a chance to sit down and talk to Ray in the Full Tilt lounge, an exotic themed suite decked out with leopard skin couches, and lamps and tapestries, instead of fluorescent lighting and bare tan walls. Ray & I spoke about year one of Full Tilt, the lessons learned, and where he sees his company, and this brave new industry of online poker going in the future.



John Caldwell: Tell me a little about your background, and how you got started with Full Tilt?

Ray Bitar: Well, from a Poker perspective, I started playing poker when I was about 12. I started playing tournament poker when I was about 20 or 21. Professionally, my background was trading equities, and I have been doing that since I was about 16. I traded on the Pacific Stock Exchange in Los Angeles for about eight years, and I was a market maker. From there I partnered up with a company, and formed an office with about 35 traders, and ran that office. That's where I met Chris Ferguson for the first time, in 1999. He came into my office, and I helped him with his trading. We really hit it off, and he helped me get my poker game to another level, and I helped get his trading up to another level.

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I traded equities until September 2003, and then I took a hiatus to come and run Tilt Ware.

JC: One thing I noticed the minute I walked in to the World Series of Poker was this suite (Full Tilt have a suite right outside the WSOP tournament room where players can lounge, and mingle with fans). What was your thinking behind the suite, and do you think it gives you an edge?

RB: I definitely think it gives us an edge. It gives us a presence. This idea goes back to before last years WSOP. I wanted a place where people could come and meet the players. The core philosophy behind our business is to educate, to have there be a common bond between our professional players, and the public. This suite is something we have been working on for months before we got here. It gives us a chance to show our brand, and really show the class at which our brand is at.

When I spoke to Harrah's, it was all about promoting the WSOP, giving fans access to the players, and putting something on that would allow Harrah's to hold their heads up high as well.

It was a challenge to get Harrah's to approve this, because in the past some other operators have come to tournaments, distributing CDs, and not put on a very classy show. The casinos here have licenses, and we have to be sensitive to that, and what the [Nevada Gaming] commission says. It was a long road, but at the end of the day, I think they are happy with it.

JC: You recently launched a new full tilt poker.com, which has a significantly different look. Talk about the thought process behind that upgrading, and why you made the changes

RB: When we first launched, we thought it would be really cool, and good looking with black, and red, and what we realized is that our original website was very dark, and many of the players had scowls on their faces, etc. People found this somewhat intimidating, so we wanted to do something with different colors, and a more friendly feel, which is more consistent with our pledge.

JC: Can you give me your thoughts about regulation, specifically in the US with respect to online gaming.

RB: I'm very positive about that. I think the main concern, at least from what I have heard in the past is that no one thought that you could regulate online gaming, or online poker. I think with the passing of the U.K. Gaming Act, it shows that you can regulate, and tax online gaming. Personally, I think it's a matter of time until that happens here. It won't be tomorrow, but I think its going in that direction. I also think there are 50 million Americans who want to play poker, and it is becoming accepted as a game of skill.

Our leaders are concerned with other things like feeding tubes, and what have you. So, I have a very positive outlook, but I think it will take time.

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JC: Obviously, this industry is booming right now. I have heard counts as high as 500 as far as the number of active online poker rooms at the moment. Does the crowding in this space alter your strategy, or make you adapt.

RB: Not really. When we started, there were about 200 rooms that we knew of. We knew that Full Tilt had a competitive advantage. We also knew that if we delivered on our promise with good software, and good marketing, the players would come. I think there are really only about 20 rooms out there, probably 15 major rooms. The rest are skins [rooms that run off the software of another room, but appear to be different], and skins of skins. The barrier to enter this business is not high, from a cost perspective, but the barrier to achieve critical mass is very high. Differentiating a brand is also very difficult in such a crowded space.

JC: In that model we just discussed, where there are 500 online rooms, but only 20 or so significant ones, what happens to the other 480 in the coming months and years?

RB: I think what is going to happen is already happening. Of these 480 rooms, there are many sites that try to give it a shot for a little while, and they try to market, and maybe things don't go their way, and they wind up selling to another skin, and consolidating. I have seen that happen, and it is continuing to happen.

Going with a skin, you do have that security as well, because what usually happens is another skin comes in and takes it, and players aren't in any danger of losing their money.

JC: Back to Full Tilt. Clearly, your strategy is to feature the pros. Obviously, this has helped you. What have been the challenges with this strategy?

RB: The biggest challenge has been that there are a lot of people who don't believe the pro players actually play on the site. That has been the biggest challenge, to convince people that, yes - that is Howard Lederer playing, yes that is Phil Ivey. These players have a huge amount of integrity, and they would never enter into something where they would have someone play for them. That has been a huge challenge.

Also, I think initially our website was a bit intimidating. Some people would think to themselves 'why do I want to play against the best in the world? They are going to beat me out of my money'. I think we have overcome that, people now come online, and meet the pros, and have a positive experience, and actually wind up following the pro. Plus, our pros like to give action, and that translates to a more fun experience for the player.

JC: Recently Party Poker went public on the London Stock Exchange. Is this a possible exit strategy for Full Tilt?

RB: Its really too early to tell, and that is really up to the operators, Full Tilt. As Tilt Ware, we are considering all options, and I think we are taking a wait and see attitude with not just Party, but 888, and Empire, which recently went public. We will see how those play out, but at the moment, we're leaving all options open.

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